

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A data searching apparatus that searches a database of patent document data files for a desired patent document data file, based on a search condition set by a user, each patent document data file including a plurality of search keys for providing clues to know contents of the patent document data files, the search keys being categorized in a plurality of fields including an IPC symbol, an F-term, and a keyword, the data searching apparatus comprising:

a receiving unit operable configured to receive, from the user, a search query that is a logical formula including an AND search query and an OR search query

a search query displaying unit operable configured to display the search query received by the receiving unit on [[one]] a first window that is opened in a region of a screen;

a searching unit operable configured to search the database for at least one or more patent document data [[file]] files that satisfies satisfy the search query received by the receiving unit; [[and]]

a data-file-list displaying unit configured to display a list of the one or more patent document data files that are search results by the searching unit on a second window that is opened in a region different from the region of the screen in which the first window is opened, such that the first window and the second window are simultaneously displayed on the screen;

a file selection unit configured to cause the user to refer to the search query displayed on the first window and the list of the one or more patent document data files displayed on the second window that are displayed on the screen, and cause the user to operate the second window so as to select one of the one or more patent document data files;

an extracting unit ~~operable~~ configured to extract a plurality of frequently-used search keys for each of the fields, from the patent document data file that is a search selection result by the searching selection unit,

the searching unit includes:

a search-key-list displaying unit ~~operable~~ configured to display a list of the frequently-used search keys extracted for each of the plurality of fields by the extracting unit adjacent the search-condition-set by the user on a third window that is opened in a region different from the regions of the screen in which the first window and the second window are opened, such that the first window, the second window, and the third window are simultaneously displayed on the screen;

a key-selection ~~receiving~~ unit ~~operable~~ configured to receive, ~~from the user,~~ selection of at least one search key from the list displayed by the search-key-list displaying unit cause the user to refer to the search query displayed on the first window, the list of the one or more patent document data files displayed on the second window, and the list of the frequently-used search keys displayed on the third window that are displayed on the screen, and cause the user to operate the third window so as to select one of the frequently used search keys; and

a retry search ~~instruction~~ unit operable to add the selected search key selected in the key-selection ~~receiving~~ unit, as an element of the OR search query for each of the fields, to the search query, create a new search query, display the new search query on another region different from the one region, and cause the searching unit to transmit the new search query to the search query displaying unit to cause the search query displaying unit to display the new search query on the first window, and retry the search for a desired patent document data file that satisfies the new search query, wherein

the data searching apparatus repeats retrying the search until the desired patent document data is found.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) The data searching apparatus of Claim [[2]] 1, wherein
the file-selection receiving unit receives, from the user, selection of a plurality of patent document data files one after another from the list displayed by the data-file-list displaying unit, and then receives, from the user, one of (a) a key extraction instruction to extract search keys from each of the selected patent document data files and (b) an output instruction to output each of the selected patent document data files,

the selective extracting unit extracts search keys from each of the selected patent document data files when the file-selection receiving unit receives the key extraction instruction,

the searching unit, every time when the file-selection receiving unit receives selection of one or a predetermined number of patent document data files, reads the selected patent document data files and stores therein the read patent document data files, and

the data searching apparatus further comprises:

a result outputting unit operable to output the patent document data files stored in the searching unit when the file-selection receiving unit receives the output instruction.

4.-16. (Cancelled)

17. (Currently Amended) The database searching apparatus of claim 1 wherein the ~~search key display~~ search-key-list displaying unit displays [[the]] a hit ratio.

18.-19. (Cancelled)

20. (Currently Amended) The database searching apparatus of claim 1 wherein the ~~search key display~~ search-key-list displaying unit simultaneously displays the search keys in a plurality of categories adjacent a display of the search condition to enable a user to paste the displayed search keys so as to modify the search condition for a further search query.